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ABSTRACT

This review evaluates the writings and opinions of Americans and Iranians on relations and influences between institutions of higher education in Iran and the United States before and after the 1979 revolution. The review explores the arrival of modern western education in Iran, Egypt, and Turkey where a traditional education system had prevailed since the seventh century. It describes the influence of religion and education in Iran, the development of Iranian higher education, the development and role of the "madrasah" (traditional Islamic education systems), Iranian universities before the revolution, western involvement in Iranian higher education, problems with the adoption of the French university system curriculum, and the fundamental conflict faced by universities based on western-style higher education in traditional cultures such as Iran's. The study also examines the role and effect of the revolution on higher education in Iran and the influence of the universities on the revolution. It notes the modernization of Pahlavi University in part through cooperation with the University of Pennsylvania and other similar cooperative relationships. It concludes that many scholars recognize that the Iranian higher education system has confronted many major problems in adopting westernized higher education. Contains 51 end notes. (JB)

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PROBLEMS AND ISSUES IN HIGHER EDUCATION: PERSPECTIVES ON IRAN-UNITED STATES EDUCATIONAL RELATIONS AND INFLUENCES

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ABSTRACT

These books and publications contain information concerning Iranian higher education as well as other related areas of Iranian educational affairs. Both types of data describe and interpret Iranian higher education relations with the United States. The documents concerning this realm have been written either by Iranian scholars or by Americans who were involved in Iranian higher education affairs prior to and after the Revolution of 1979. The documents include reports, published books by Iranian and American scholars, Persian related books which have been translated into English, and doctoral dissertations related to Iranian higher education.

The documents are either particularly on the topics of education and higher education in Iran, or only some sections of the documents were embarked to education. The documents and selections are chosen based on their relevance and uniqueness to my research.

However, these documents demonstrate that many scholars recognized that both before and after the Revolution, the Iranian higher education system confronted many major internal and external problems. The problems grew not only from the wholesale adoption of a westernized and some of the Western European higher education, but also from the country's unique culturally, economic, political, religious, and social characteristics.

PROBLEMS AND ISSUES IN HIGHER EDUCATION: PERSPECTIVES ON IRAN-UNITED STATES EDUCATIONAL RELATIONS AND INFLUENCES

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Related Books and Publications

These documents either are particularly on the topics of education and higher education in Iran, or only some sections of the documents were embarked to education. The documents and selections are chosen based on their relevance and uniqueness to my research. Perhaps, there are a good number of related documents and publications that can be examined and studied by those who are interested in the topic.

Among many related publications, an anthology of articles about Iranian educational and cultural development was edited by Lenczowski in 1978. In his book Lenczowski claims that one of the major problems within the framework of higher education relations between Iran and the United States which had been noticed for the past twenty years is the "brain drain" problem.

> *...there remained a serious problem, of thousands of student who had obtained their degrees abroad, many were not returning to Iran. Thus their costly education abroad was lost to the country. Moreover, the young people who studied abroad were often the most capable students.*[1]

In Iran Under Pahlavis, several developments in Iranian higher education were identified.

> *In 1962 a new development took place: the Pahlavi University was created in Shiraz along American lines. It offered many courses in English and its teaching staff included a number of foreigners...the American educated Issa Sadiq...provided much of the early guidance in the establishment of this university.*[2]

Joseph S. Syzliowcz wrote another book in which Iranian higher education was examined. He reviewed the traditional educational system in three Islamic societies of the Middle East; Iran, Egypt and Turkey. Syzliowicz recognized that "Islamic society had created a unique educational system that prevailed in all parts of the Middle East from the seventh century onward."[3] He discussed the arrival of modern western education in the Middle East and noted the conflict that has been created because

LE027 774

of this gradual infiltration. The effect of western education on these Middle Eastern societies is interpreted in these words.

> *The changes in the Middle East during the last 150 years have disrupted the old society and culture. Conflict and reaction are evident everywhere as the interaction between the two cultures has led to the dislocation of value judgements and a fundamental unsettling of ancient ways. The individual and his society are divided against themselves, suffering from feeling at the same time attracted and repelled when confronted with the nonchalant aggression of the western mentality.*[4]

Regarding the influence of religion and education in Iran, he believes that Iran culturally and educationally is very different from other Middle Eastern nations. "...thus Iran today confronts a fundamental dilemma involving conflict among cultural, political, and developmental considerations..."[5]

On the existing cultural conflicts between the believers in traditional Iranian Islamic education and those advocating modern or western education methods, Michael M. J. Fischer offered a comparative analysis:

> *In the state institutions student are forced to take classes they do not like. They are pressured to study for grades and for diplomas rather than for knowledge. Both teachers and students anxiously await release by the bell at the end of the class period. Students and teachers often do not respect each other. Teachers pontificate; students are captive audiences rather than partners in learning...The pedagogical ideal of the madrasa is just the reverse. There are no grades, so students study only for learning's sake. Students who do not study are not flunked out, but neither are they elevated by bribery or favoritism. For each there is a place according to his capacity and inclination...Students study with teachers of their own choice. There is thus never a disciplinary problem or a problem of lack of respect for teachers.*[6]

Fischer's perceptions regarding the historical development, western foundations, religious influences and ups-and-downs of Iranian higher education are stated in this paragraph.

> *The fight to wrest education from church control, the demand for professional education, and state-supported education have all come to Iran too. By the turn of the twentieth century there had already been a series of new education, and initiatives. In 1811 the first student was sent abroad for study by the government, though by 1851 only twenty-nine student had so been sent. In 1851 the Dar-ul-Fanun was established to train government officials: it was free, was meant for elite sons aged fourteen to sixteen...In 1918 some*

five hundred Iranians were studying in Europe, and by 1930-31 this figure had risen to fifteen hundred. Meanwhile a series of lower level modern schools had been established by Zoroastrian (1950's), Christian (1880's) and Jewish (1920's) philanthropic agencies. Local Muslim leaders also established new schools, starting with those of Rushdiyya. In 1935 the University of Tehran, incorporating some of the earlier professional schools, opened. It was followed in 1949 by the Universities of Tabriz, Isfahan, Mashhad, and Shiraz; and then by Ahwaz in 1955, Jundishapur in 1956, National University in 1966. By 1979 twelve more universities had opened or were under construction. There are also a large number of nonuniversity institutes of higher education, so that in 1975 only 45 percent of students in higher education were enrolled in the universities.[7]

Professor Hossein Nasr, a former university president and expert on western higher education, is also familiar with Islamic and traditional Iranian higher education. One of his vitally important works regarding Iranian and Islamic culture confronting western education is of great influence on western culture in an Islamic society.

Two contending systems have created in the Muslim world today a chasm between a western-educated minority and a majority which on both the popular and intellectual levels is rooted in traditional Islam. A generation of thought based on modern science and philosophy, which makes it difficult for them to understand the language of traditional works in which Islamic wisdom in contained. One sees in many parts of the Muslim world two men belonging to the same country and even speaking the language externally, but who do not understand each other because they are using different systems of reference and worlds of ideas.[8]

Nasr also wrote a chapter on Islamic science and education in the book called, The Islamic Impact, published in 1984. His historical analysis of development of the madrasah and its curriculum materials and the subject of science and philosophy are an interesting part of the chapter.

As far as the madrasah is concerned, it became a formal educational institution in early Islamic history and developed into a full fledged college and university system by the fourth/tenth centuries. The radiance of such institutions and their significance was so great that soon they began to become a noticeable element throughout most of the Islamic world. They in fact, played a fundamental role in the foundation of the European centers of higher education, a role that is only now becoming fully recognized. ...philosophy continued to be taught seriously in

Persia until today, but there is no doubt that when the modern western educational system was brought to the Islamic world in the nineteenth century, there was practically no madrasah which had preserved its former vitality in different fields of knowledge, especially in mathematics, and the natural and medical sciences. Moreover, even during the height of activity in the Islamic sciences, there is little doubt that in the domain of the intellectual sciences, except for logic and philosophy, the natural and mathematical sciences were taught to a large extent outside of the madrasahs.[9]

William H. Forbis, a research-oriented journalist, wrote The Fall of the Peacock Throne: The Story of Iran. For one of the chapters of the book about higher education in Iran, he visited most of the major universities in Iran and interviewed Iranian university administrators, faculty and students. Even though the book generally is a description of the history, politics, geography, religion, culture and people of Iran; it does include this one chapter concerning Iranian higher education and its major problems. It was these problems that had an influential role in helping to form the Revolution of 1978.

Concerning the structures and status of the Iranian universities before the Revolution Forbis asserts that,

Pahlavi University became Iran's prestige school, and the American model for a university became the favorite one. Among other advantages, it trains Iranians to go on to doctorates from American Schools...In Ahavz, the university with the euphonious name Jundishahpur reincarnates in its beautifully tiled new building what was the world's greatest medical center for several centuries in the Sassanian dynasty. Lately it has become strong in English, with at least until 1979 -- thirty American professors in this subject and library of fifty thousand English titles ("but we have no chalk or erasers," one of the American professors told me)...Abu Ali Sina Technical University (named for the eleventh-century physician and philosopher usually called Avicenna in English) at Hamadan (site of Avicenna's tomb) will reinforce Iran's capacity for higher education in technology. Abu Ali Sina's foreign guidance comes not from the United States but from France; even the near-square-mile campus is a design of Paris architect Georges Gandiliss.[10]

Regarding other European countries and the former U.S. involvement in Iranian higher education Forbis claims that,

Another European country that is guiding the founding of a new Iranian school is West Germany, which is assisting the University of Gilan in Rasht and will provide instruction in German. A third forthcoming

institution, in Mazanderan, will give graduate and post-doctoral courses only, and try to make up for Iran's lack of research in universities. Harvard University, which ten years ago gave the Shah an honorary LL.D., was put in charge of this school's new design...before the revolution, no fewer than fifty-nine American Universities were providing guidance to Iranian colleges or universities or to governmental entities. Bryn Mawr, Green Bay, Goucher, Florida State, Johns Hopkins, Lewis and Clark--they were all there. Pahlavi had brought in Kent State, feeling that some of its problems were more akin to a young American state university than to Pahlavi's old, established advisor, the University of Pennsylvania. In a valiant effort to upgrade itself, Ferdowsi University in Mashhad took for its ally Georgetown University of Washington, D.C. Massachusetts Institute of Technology helped Tehran's Aryamehr University toward its goal of becoming an Iranian MIT. The University of Tehran counted on collaboration from the Universities of Illinois, Indiana, Alabama, Colorado State, and Utah. All this cooperation ran dead against the Islamic grain of Ayatollah Khomeini's revolution, and the new government broke virtually all of the aid contract.[11]

Analyzing some of the major problems of Iranian universities, Forbis points out that,

The ten biggest universities enrolled forty-three percent of students who are in higher education; the rest attended the small and specialized colleges and institutions. Many of those began as free enterprises aimed at making big profits by ripping off tuition from desperate students who failed to get into the universities; the Shah tried to curb such ventures by putting them under university supervision. Now about a dozen of these schools would rank high anywhere in the world...When what most Iranian students want from higher education is a piece of paper. They want a degree, which is essential for a career in government, valuable for a career in business and industry, and prestigious in society. One gets a degree by passing examinations, and one passes examinations by memorizing knowledge, and their job is to spoon it to the students. Students believe that there is an answer to every problem. Anything that stands between the student and the degree is a plot. One such barrier is to demand that the student read books; a class syllabus of no more than one hundred pages is thought to be sufficient reading. Seminars and essay writing are equally unnecessary barriers. Too much classwork is also deplored.[12]

The Education and Social Awakening in Iran was produced by Reza Arasteh, a western-type educated Iranian living in the West.

This book has been an important reference for many Iranian and American scholars interested in the history and modern structures of the Iranian educational system. It was published in 1969. Before many other educators did, Arasteh discussed the importance and role of the Madrasah as well as the modern western-style university in the Iranian educational system. One part of the book deals with the missionaries and their educational activities in Iran. He also pays attention to the development of modern Iranian higher education. Arasteh analyzed the social status of Iranian professors.

> *University professors have always occupied an important social position in Iran, not only because of their learning but for the power they exercise in the community. Their appearance in the classroom in equally imposing, for they are accustomed to lecture in the European manner, reminiscent of the way in which they themselves received their university education. They expect and get the utmost respect from their students. In turn, the university professors introduce a totally new pattern of experiences to many students, especially those who are now coming from the provinces in increasing numbers. The students look to their teacher for guidance in all manners--academic, political and occupational.. In many instances a professor has completely determined a student's way of thinking, his political ideology and his choice of a profession. College students who lack social connections often depend on their professor for an introduction to social life. Many who have turned to politics still retain their university position and keep in contact with their former students.*[13]

Arasteh points out numbers of problems which Iranian higher education was facing in 1960's. For instance, one of the fundamental problems of the higher education system, he believes, was the adoption of curriculum from the French university system.

> *The curriculum of the colleges was patterned after the French system. The educational planner did not recognize that the transference of the educational curriculum, the product of one culture, to another culture (characterized by other needs) would produce individuals not suited to either. Thus, the curriculum has lacked articulation with the society in both a general and specific sense a lack of general articulation implies a lack of coordination between the curriculum of the colleges and the social needs, or in other words, between specific educational objectives and general ones. A lack of specific articulation refers to a lack of one year to those of the next and to the life aims of the student.*[14]

Arasteh did not miss pointing out other parts of higher education that contained problems. He believed that for high

school graduates entering the university was a major dilemma.

> *A student who wishes to enter the University must have a high school diploma and obtain a high standing on a competitive written examination administered by his chosen faculty. Because the university of Tehran and the provincial colleges can accept only a tenth of those who apply, competition runs high and family influence often plays a part in acceptance. Student enrollment at the University of Tehran totaled 9,321 in 1958, as compared to 2,000 in 1937. The 1968 enrollment totaled 14,471.*[15]

Clarence Herdershot published Politics, Polemics and Pedagogs... in 1975. Concerning the background of higher education relation she discussed the involvement of private and governmental agencies in higher education exchanges. Details are given about the historical process of educational assistance provided by the U.S. governmental agencies to Iran since June 5, 1950. It was at this time that policies called the "Technical Assistance Program" (TAP) and named "Point Four" were born. Later on much of all United States higher educational assistance was placed under TAP. Hendershot gives a chapter on higher education which includes information concerning the reorganization of the University of Tehran, Pahlavi University and the College of Education of the University of Tehran.

Hendershot discusses the American institutions and government agencies which were involved in reorganizing some of the Iranian institutions. Among them were the Utah State University, the University of Southern California, and the United States Office of Education. The shortages and difficulties of reorganization at some of the Iranian universities and the progress that was eventually made are described. The assistance of the AID and the help from the University of Pennsylvania made it possible for the University of Shiraz, or Pahlavi University, to be reorganized as an American-style university.

> *By 1967 Pahlvai (the University of Shiraz) had become firmly established as "American-type" university. It had its board of trustees, ...an administrative organization of four colleges each with several departmental and all under a Chancellor, ...and an advanced form of student government...Structurally and program-wise, Pahlavi would have graced even the country which it emulated. With dual language usage (both Farsi and English), it was an accomplishing a feat few American universities have attempted.*[16]

Culturally it had been difficult to establish an American-style university in a tradition-oriented Iranian city, considering the cultural differences, political atmosphere, and religious beliefs of the intelligentsia and the masses, the governmental bureaucracy, and organizational conflicts. Henershot claims that,

Overcoming the resistance of entrenched opponents to the reforms was extremely difficult. Many in the Ministry of Education were unhappy to see the university being removed from its control. Only the Shah's unchallengeable outspoken endorsement and support could have overcome such resistance. At the same time there were those who questioned how an "American-type" institution could be established in a controlled environment such as Iran has. One top official observed that it was impossible for an Iranian university to permit the freedom of expression of an American university. One hobbling anomaly was that despite the declared objective to establish an "American-type" university, not one of the Chancellors had substantial first-hand experience with American universities and one man who held that position for several years did not have a collegiate degree...[17]

Hendershot not only recognized the difficulties in the way of higher educational development, but also observed the positive changes which were taking place. He comments that, "...it might be noted that the Pahlavi soon set a challenge which the other universities of Iran were quick to recognize and established organizational and program features which they hastened to emulate."[18]

Phalsapheh-i Talim-va-Tarbiyet, (The Philosophy of Education and Learning) is a valuable document written by Ali Shariati, an Iranian professor of sociology and critic of the unsuitable basis and foundations of the modern Iranian higher education system. He received his higher education in Iranian and French universities as well as at a traditional Iranian madrasah. Although the book is titled The Philosophy of Education and Learning, it contains perspectives on higher education. Shariati's discussion and comparison of the madrasah and university states that,

In the modern higher education system a doctoral student studies one subject area, but in the madrasah educational system the student studies several areas including high level research, divine sciences, critical theoretical sciences and etcetera, and the student does not have to concentrate on one area of knowledge..the Maktab's curriculum is bases on Iranian religion and culture...Iran before the influences of western culture has been a religious society, and all Iranian social foundations and life manifestations including material, political, economical and national foundations were justified on religion (Shiah Islam)...in a Maktab school system if a student failed it does mean that he is not smart and must be kept back. The Maktab has been a suitable elementary institution for the Iranian rural life style, and it has been created according to the particular social and humanistic conditions of our society. In a Maktab and Madrasah system of education there were no age barriers

and any student could enter the maktab and masrasah or higher education institution...any student interested in getting an education could enter a maktab and madrasah to the highest level of education in spite of his poor social, economical condition ... Madrasahs were built beside the Mosques, it was one of the Mosque's institutions which stated an interdependence between religion and science. It was because of this that huge buildings called Mosque-Madrasahs were created. Examples of that are the Al-Azhar in Egypt, Al-Hamra in Spain, and the Madrasah-e Sepahsalar in Tehran... In the past even some of the small villages have had madrasah, therefore one uniquenesses of our society was to spread the religious scientists all over the country; not to keep them all in the capital so that only the capital benefited from the scientists' knowledge and education.[19]

This book is valuable in terms of giving and understanding of the social cultural foundations of the Iranian traditional and modern higher education systems. A translation of it would add many facts about traditional Islamic schooling to the literature which is now available in English. Shariati was very concerned about the present condition of the madrasah and its future.

...the Madrasahs are facing all kinds of problems and we must start solving them based on many years of educational experiences of the madrasah... one of the problems which the madrasah is suffering today is the administrative one on one hand, and on the other hand, administering the madrasah along with the rapid development of the modern school system which has weakened the madrasah system.[20]

Another critic of modern Iranian higher education is Jalal-e Al-e Ahmad, an administrator and high school teacher in the Iranian school system. His book on education, including higher education, is called Gharbzadeqi (Weststruckness), originally published in 1962, but scholars and the public did not have access to it until 1978. Fortunately, the book has been translated into English by Ahmad Alizadeh and John Green. Gharbzadeqi covers most of the problem areas of the Iranian educational system. In particular, the book contains a chapter titled: "What are our Schools and Universities Doing?" Ahmad's critical view of the higher education scene is conveyed in these words.

With regard to educational and university issues, another big problem is the problem of this flood of returnees from Europe and America. All of who have returned at the very least as candidates for a ministry job, but ended up as governmental deal weight. They are undoubtedly a windfall for us, like an odd shoe in desert, but be realistic and look what garbage every one of these windfalls turns out to be after coming

back and finding a place in an organization and becoming established. They have no area of expertise, no work to do, and no ability to get anything done. They are neither generous nor wholehearted, and most of them are irresponsible. Especially since even those in this group also consider themselves and their opinions to be worthless alongside those of the western consultants and advisors who dominate the situation. They are perfect examples of culturally transplanted Gharbzadegi, a people with their feet in the air, transmitters of the opinions of foreign advisors and experts. Contrary to its reputation, and in my view, the larger this group of returnees from abroad becomes, the less it accomplishes, and the greater is the helplessness and discord within the organization under its influence ![21]

Al-e Ahmad discusses the fundamental problems of higher education in another of his works entitled, Dar Khedmat ve khyanat-e Roushanfekran (About the Service and Treacherousness of the Intellectuals). He claims that the difficulties started right from the beginning of the arrival and the formation of western higher educational thought in the traditional society of Iran.

Why from the first day, in the era of the Ghagar rule, did we establish modern schools for modern science, instead of placing modern science in our traditional madrasahs? By doing so we got rid of all our traditional universities. One of the building of one university in England is an imitation of the Madar-Shah madrasah of Esfahan, and we changed our madrasahs to museums. Instead we have established the University of Esfahan which produces mostly degrees, and not much research activities and scientific studies which are contributions to the world of knowledge. We destroyed our active traditional schools which were the center for intellectual studies, and we replaced them with modern schools which are not able to add any new ideas to the scientific knowledge of the modern time.[22]

Ali Shariatmadari, the first Minister of Science and Higher Education after the Revolution of 1979, published a number of books related to higher education. He argues in one of his works, Talim va Tarbiet-e Islami (Islamic Education and Learning), that the bases of Iranian higher education were not suitable ones from the formation level, because it started with western oriented missions and a western foundation of thought right from the beginning of the establishment of Darulfounoun (Politechnical College) in 1851. These are his words about the formation of modern Iranian higher education:

The formation of the Darulfounoun (1851) took place in order to provide for the needs of the country for medical, architecture and military systems. Because the foreign instructors taught there,

inevitably and forcefully the goal, methods and content of Iranian educational system were influenced by the western systems, and I believe that, the goals and missions of western higher education itself were in conflict and inconsistent at that time. There was no logical order among the educational ideas and their practicality in the West. It was at that kind of historical period that our higher educational foundations of today started to form with a direct impact of the western educational system, which itself was in a state of confusion with its missions and ideology. At the time when the first Minister of education went to France to learn about the higher education system, as soon as he returned he started to establish an Iranian higher education system exactly similar to the French one...for example, the establishment of Tehran University was neither planned according to basic needs of the society nor according to the need and advancement of the scientific subjects and knowledge..., in the process of establishment of many institutions of higher education, the basic needs of these institutions were not considered in recent years; institutions did not have proper planning, did not have instructors, did not have educational facilities, tools and labs, and even were not established in suitable places and locations according to needs of each area of the country... Many universities spread all over the country and none of them were responding to the needs of the society and are not proportionate to the social conditions of the country...but they all have too many students...[23]

A book entitled, Revolutionary Islam in Iran: Popular Liberation or Religious dictatorship, contains a chapter concerning the "Cultural Revolution" and the political reasons and motives for fundamental change in Iranian higher education system after the 1979 Revolution. It was written by Suroosh Irfani, a native of Pakistan and former Professor at Shiraz University (the Pahlavi University). His intellectual views are based on this statement of the founder of the Revolution, the Ayatollah Khomeini concerning the universities, "Those who saved our nation are the people, these beloved universities, these beloved theological students...All the troubles afflicting mankind have their roots in universities..."[24]

Irfani's comment on the subject is important because it is discussed by a person who think that politics and higher education in Iran are inseparable and affect each other directly. His analytical view on the matter of universities and the Revolution show the degree of conflict within the new political system and the Iranian higher education leaders.

That the universities were the center of gravity of the Islamic Revolution remains an indisputable fact. Indeed, the Revolution had been germinated, sprung, and was sustained mainly by the university...The anti-

university atmosphere have thus been manufactured, the IRP mobilized its forces on April 1980, and moved in to neutralize the challenge posed by the universities and centers for higher learning, using the pretext that universities had to be 'Islamized' through a "Cultural Revolution'...It was therefore vital, argued student followers of Ayatollah Khomeini in their statement, to bring about a revolution in the system of universities. Only then would the 'unhealthy' society become 'automatically pure and healthy'. Thus, according to this logic and outlook, all the problems of the world could be 'automatically' solved by closing down all the universities in the world. [25]

Irfani's views are interesting, they are contradictory to the idea that the universities were closed for a fundamental 'Islamization'. He believes the universities were shut down because of political conflicts among the different political parties which had contributed to the formation of the Revolution.

Iran a Revolution in Turmoil was written by Hale Afshar, a native of Iran, and professor at the University of Bradford, England. It was published in 1985, and contains a section about basic changes in the Iranian higher education system after the Revolution. She explains the closure of the Iranian universities and some of the rationales behind that.

The closure of the universities was hailed by Khomeini and his supporters as the Iranian Cultural Revolution. It was intended to clean up the foreign-orientated, dependent, imperialist and biased nature of academia and replace it by new revolutionary and specifically Islamic context and content. The Iranian Cultural revolution, however, was not merely a matter of curriculum improvement. In fact the most Western oriented faculties, such as medical schools, were soon reopened and by 1984 a number of technical and scientific faculties were also allowed to reopen. The closure of the universities was both a political decision-made to control the discontented youth- and a cultural one, aimed at simplifying education to make it more similar to the unquestioning style of route learning practiced in the old clergy-controlled school, maktab and madrasah. [26]

Afshar stated an interesting point concerning the role and the contributions of the universities in the formations of the Revolution.

The closure of universities, however, was not merely to initiate Islamification, it was also a conscious attempt by the government to prevent the young and educated from gathering in an open forum for discussions...there was a long-established history of organized resistance to dictatorial oppression in universities and they had been the hotbed of

revolutionary ideas which preceded the arrival of the Islamic Revolution. The universities nurtured many of the radical authors and thinkers who had for long opposed the Pahlavi regime.[27]

Muhammad Derakhshesh, a former Minister of Education in Iran in the 1950's, has published several books on contemporary Iranian political and social problems and their interrelations with higher education. He critiques the Iranian higher education system under the past regime.

...There is no real rule, regulation and control in our universities, the curriculum and texts are similar to medieval curriculum materials and texts, and the hand-outs and pamphlets being used in the classrooms belong to the stone-age and the medieval time...Our university system seems to be in a deep sleep as of the sleeping of the Ashab-Kahfs' (the seven sleepers of the cave, a religious story from the Koran)...Universities are not meeting the scientific needs of our present time. Publications are translations of half century ago and our faculty members translate them as their own publications... There is no clear mission and purpose of sending our students to the other countries for more education. As a matter of fact, the government never has announced and cleared the goals and the places of needs for this program of "Sending Students Out-side of Iran"...basically, degrees, knowing officials, and having relations are important factors in obtaining a university position rather than appropriate qualities and a good knowledge and specialty...Our faculties are graduates of the foreign universities but they are unable to read and write in the language of that country in which they obtained their education...a big portion of our budget is allocated for Iranian student offices in western countries, but the money is spent to control these students' political activities, and there is no one to guide and help these students in their educational affairs and other difficulties in a foreign country.[28]

Derakhshesh, as permanent longtime leader of the Iranian Teacher Association living now in Washington D.C., sees the irregularity and confusion of the educational system of Iran as the basic sources of the major social, political and economic problems that Iran has been facing. Amir-Kabir Publications in Tehran has been publishing the statements and saying of the Ayatollah Khomeini regarding the universities and the Cultural Revolution. One of the publications which was produced in 1984 is closely related to our inquiry. It is titled: Dar Jostejoo-ye Rah as Kalm-e Imam, Daneshgah va Inghelab-e Farhangi (In Search of the Way from the Sayings of the Leader, University and Cultural Revolution). The book had been the basis for a step-by-step policy of remaking in the Iranian university system since

1979, the beginning of the Islamization of the universities to the present time. One major area that the leader of the Iranian Islamic Revolution emphasizes in his policy making statement is, "...no western or eastern-oriented values and policy must be practiced in our universities, but Islamic ethics policy must rule in the universities."[29]

Many dissertations have been concerned with Iranian higher education problems and progress. In order to select the most relevant ones for this study, those which discuss United States-Iranian higher education relations and review the Iranian higher education system after the Revolution of 1978 will be examined.

Regarding the educational system and influences of western culture, Ebrahim Mashari believed that,

> *The cultural impact of the contact with the West was, however, significant. The nineteenth century Iranian culture manifested, as the economic domain, a process of dissolution of the traditional structure and a process of integration, in the form of assimilation, to western culture. The increase in western political and economic influences accompanied the increase in contacts with the western culture which developed a desire for internal reforms along western lines and at the same time a reaction against Western influences. The whole situation was contradictory and hazardous. On the one hand, western cultural contact functioned as an awakening force. It indeed introduced new ideas and outlooks as well as alternatives for social life to the people of Iran, particularly the intellectual. On the other hand, however, this development took place in a condition of increasingly economic and political domination and within the context of a pattern of dependent relations. Consequently, western cultural influence created a pattern of cultural dependency in the society. The elite groups who were exposed to the western culture began to look to the west as a source of inspiration and ideas so that the west became the model of modernization, central to the life of the nation, its policies and outlooks. Westernization was used in Iranian literature as synonymous with modernization, meaning the growing consciousness in Iran of the material and intellectual progress of the west and the adaptation and application of western civilization to traditional Iranian society.*[30]

Ezat Nadri in his doctoral dissertation about the rapid growth and the all-areas-shortage of the Iranian higher education claims that,

> *Higher education in Iran faces a tremendous task in the decades ahead. Recognition of the need for expansion if reelected in the extremely rapid growth in enrollment and the total number of colleges and universities. The increase in manpower demand of industry and business have compounded the already*

urgent problems of inadequate educational facilities and shortage of qualified faculty. The educational system must continue its search for quality while handling a larger quantity of students than ever before.[31]

Ali Akbar Farhangi, in the concluding part of his dissertation, expressed his concern about students' studying abroad. He urged more careful planning.

...Students enrollment abroad has several serious problems and there are important disadvantages to this educational migration. There are more than 100,000 Iranian students abroad. We can find many qualified teachers among them to teach in our expanding universities. To identify these students before they leave would be financially beneficial. Moreover, there must be provision for the best graduates from higher education institutions to continue their post-graduate studies in scientific, technological and administrative areas.[32]

Mansoor Soleimani wrote his dissertation about the educational impact of American missionaries on the educational programs of Iran. Actually informal higher education relations between Iran and the United States began with missionaries' activities in Iran. Soleimani discussed their positive as well as negative impacts.

Theology and sense of moral responsibility may have helped Iranian mission school students to achieve responsible positions in government and in the private sectors. The American church missionaries believed that Iranians have a rich history, literature, and culture, but in order to function as a part of the modern world, they also needed to learn to feel at home in the world culture. The Missionaries tried to build an educational system based on Iranian culture. They claimed that there had definitely been no effort to change or alter the culture, but introduce Christian principles that might help young pupils become good Iranian Christians...The impact of American church missionaries was not all positive; some of the respondents perceived negative influence. They felt that they had made Iranian students unfit to live in Iran because they introduced something different. They thought that American ideas were superior to the Iranian ideas. This was thought to have made students want to leave their native country.[33]

The An Analysis of Higher Education in Iran and a Proposal for its Improvement, is a 1974 dissertation by Muhammad Ali Naelie. He offered several resolutions to the major problems in contemporary Iranian higher education. One of his recommendations was to advance the quality of existing community

colleges and also increase their numbers because of Iran's variety in climate, distance of the cities, and the location of natural resources.

> *Iran is large in size, with an immense variety of climate, soil, flora, and natural resources. This diversity requires a flexible curriculum to fit the regional need and existing resources, such as agriculture, mining, petroleum, etc. Neither the universities of Iran, all of which are located in metropolitan areas, nor the unique curriculum of the two-year institutions can always fulfill the needs of rural areas and small communities. The prospective community junior colleges can serve their surrounding communities by better utilizing the local resources and by educating its citizens through their flexible mechanisms.*[34]

The works of many western-educated Iranians regarding culture and education have been published in Iranian Studies: Journal of the Society for Iranian Studies. In one issue of this journal Majid Tehranian claims that,

> *Modernization came to Iran, as in many African and Asian countries, primarily in the form of westernization. It meant, therefore, the political, educational, and legal institutions in favor of their western counterparts. The cohesion and coherence of a traditional corporate society was thus gradually replaced by the tensions and contradictions of modernizing institutions. The indigenous institutions have had very little time or opportunity to respond to the western challenge by adoption and adaptation; they have largely recoiled in reaction.*[35]

A short and critical study related to U.S. - Iranian educational and cultural influence was done as an inquiry based on library documents in the United States by Javad Raiesdance and Thomas E. Spencer. The introduction to the article states that, "There have been reciprocal influences. It should be noted that since World War II Iran has been a very important factor in the national security of the United States."[36] It also identifies several ways in which United States education helped to modify the Iranian educational system. Relations among some American and Iranian universities are discussed in this article. The author claims that "...it seems plausible to state that the influence has been mostly one-directional: the quality of educational programs in Iran has risen considerably."[37] Regarding how some of the American universities were involved in Iranian higher education, Raiesdana and Spencer claim that, "Some of the American universities have performed in rather general advisory roles; others have contracted to develop special projects."[38] One other remarkable point which the article includes is the number of Iranian students in the United States in 1976, "representing the largest group of foreign students in

the United States."[39]

A general analytical report of U.S.-Iranian higher education relations was published in 1976. It was concerned with higher education cooperation between Iran and the United States titled, An Analysis of U.S.-Iranian Cooperation in Higher Education. While it is a valuable report seen through western eyes, it contains shortcomings in several areas. For example, in a section called: "Analysis of Major Problems..." the authors claim that most of the problems concerning higher education in Iran occured in typical categories for western higher education such as academic, administrative and financial issues. There is no hint on those pages to indicate that the fundamental problem that Iranian higher education was then facing was a deep clash between positivist modernism and the traditional ideal values of Iranian culture and Islamic belief. So the traditional and indigenous culture and its ties with the masses were ignored into the American efforts to develop the Iranian higher education system. Instead, an attempt was made to impose a new culture which was foreign to Iran. One of the concluding remarks of the report stated that "Effective cooperation between Iran and American Universities depends in part upon mutual understanding of higher education in each country." 39a

William B. Storm and Richard W. Gable published a short analytical study in 1960 concerning technical assistance in higher education between the University of Southern California and the University of Tehran. The study contains several interesting problems which had emerged into the process of higher education relations between the United States and Iran. The U.S.C. brought over Iranian professors to train and instruct them in modern public administrative techniques. Storm and Gable claim that some twenty-five years ago,

> *Thirty Iranian scholars have been educated in the United States, in a cultural foreign to them, to prepare them to teach a subject in their own culture which was virtually unknown.*[40]

One of the problems which the two parties faced at a very early stage of the assistance is explained.

> *They (Iranians) had no words to express "public administration." We spent fully three hours with principal members of the faculty of the University to devise a phase that would express in Farsi the idea that we were trying to convey by "public administration."*[41]

When the U.S.C. advisors started their assistance to the University of Tehran in order to develop a public administration program, they learned that,

> *While the dean and chancellor of the university agreed to the cooperative venture in higher education for pubic administration, their conception of it was quite different from that of their American advisor.*

The European pattern of education predominated in Iran; many of the professors had been trained in France. The university was viewed as an agency of service to the community. Education in such a specialized and practical field as administration did not exist in Iran and was looked down on by many. Exactly what could be taught in the field of administration and management was not clear to university officials...[42]

This study, despite being very short and optimistic, is a valuable and instructive one. Some of the experiences and difficulties described in it can be considered when developing any other cross-cultural higher education relationships.

Another more recent study, Iran's Pahlavi University: A Decade of Cooperation with the University of Pennsylvania directly discusses higher education relations between an American university and an Iranian one. In it W.A. Copeland indicated that modernizing the University of Shiraz (Pahlavi) as an American-style university in Iran with the cooperation of the University of Pennsylvania had two goals.

1) to attract, by academic excellence, those students who would normally seek their undergraduate degrees abroad; and 2) to attract back to Iran, as members of the faculty, those Iranians who had their graduate degrees, primarily doctorates, from leading American institutions.[43]

A major point in this study seems to be the cooperation established mainly to resolve two major problems that Iranian higher education was facing in the sixties because of the inappropriate adoption of the western-type of higher education system years ago. First, there had been anticipation of what the consequences of this kind of system for Iran would be. The adoption of western education first created the problem of brain drain. Second, it brought about the desire of Iranian students to leave the country to pursue higher education mainly in western societies. The rapid development of the University during he first two years of cooperation is analyzed.

The United States Agency for International Development (AID), sponsor of the original survey, was impressed with the prospect of innovation in Iranian eduation as represented by Pahlavi University...An experiment has been initiated whereby Pennsylvania provides residents--American doctors-- to pahlavi in a limited number of fields from one of the University of Pennsylvania affiliated hospitals. These residents normally go to Shiraz for a period of 6 to 9 months. Thus far, residents have been sent to Shiraz for training in surgery and pediatrics. In addition, Iranian residents have come to Pennsylvania for training in veterinary medicine, OB/GYN, pathology, and pediatrics.[44]

It is interesting to note significant changes that took place in Iranian education institutions in the 1970's because of the Pahlavi-Pennsylvania cooperation in the 1970's. Copeland claimed that,

> *...all universities now have boards of trustees and full-time faculties. Sabbatical leave is granted to faculty members, and teaching loads have been reduced in order to encourage the development of research in universities. These practices were first introduced in Shiraz, but rapidly spread to other centers of learning.*[45]

A research paper conceding inter-institutional cooperation between the University for Teacher Education and the University of California, Los Angeles was published in 1981 by Thomas J. LaBele, a professor of education who was involved in this cooperation. The paper provides information about the goals of the relationship between these two Iranian and American institutions. He discusses the rapid growth of Iranian higher education and claims that the country's need for trained manpower forced the authorities to send graduate and undergraduate student to America, as well as European institutions.

> *Both the university's entrance examinations and the need for professors led to increased numbers going abroad for higher education. In 1978, some 60,000 Iranian students were estimated to be studying under official government auspices in 40 countries. Forty percent of these individuals were studying in the United States where they constituted the largest non-U.S. citizen student population of any foreign country, totaling approximately 20,000 individuals by 1976.*[46]

LaBelle recognized that the Iranian partner institution was originally French oriented and influenced by French educated administrators and professors. It then turned to American higher education methods.

> *...The University for Teacher Education (UTE) has approximately 4,000 students and is the principal institution in Iran responsible for the training of secondary school personnel. UTE went from being a French-influenced teacher training college to a university in 1973. After 1973, in an effort to develop graduate programs, upgrade its current faculty, and train new faculty, it looked primarily to the United States to borrow educational practices. Creating academic ties with U.S. institutions became common in Iran during the 1970's. Fifteen Iranian universities, for example, had a total of 42 formal links with 32 U.S. universities in the late 1976.*[47]

Perhaps higher education was one of the most efficient ways of transferring western values to Iran. On this background, "The

Westoxication" of Iran: Depictions and Reactions of Behrangi, Al-e Ahmad, and Shariati" is a related article written by Brad Hanson. The author review the ideologies of three Iranian educators whom each were exposed to western values and culture by either going through a western-type higher education system or by traveling to the western countries. These school and university professors, Behrangi, Al-e Ahmad, and Shariate, have been known as heroes as well as revolutionaries to Iranians for the last thirty-five years. Each one of them in one way or another was opposed to the wholesale adoption of western cultural and educational values by the Pahalvi regime. Hanson categorizes these educators' ideologies as follows:

> *...first is the leftist, secularist school teacher Behrangi, who mocks the trite bourgeois culture so imitative of Western culture, abhors the great income gaps in Iranian society, and protests the pervasive Iranian educational system. Behrangi urges struggle, revolutionary and violence, if need be, based on knowledge and experience, to achieve social equality and cultural independence...Next is the secularist, renowned belletrist Al-e Ahmad, who paints in broad brush strokes Iran's economic and cultural dependency on the West, dismisses religion and the ulama as a reactionary and ineffective bulwark against Western domination, and recommends "taming of the machine" through indigenouzation of technology. However, after a period of intense religious reexamination during the hajj, Al-e Ahamad came to accept religion as vital, native, non-Western part of Iranian identity with a potential for effective resistance to "Westoxication." ...Finally, there is the lay religious leader, Western-educated Shariati, who identifies with the worldwide struggle of Third World peoples against imperialism but rejects Marxism as an alternative--although at times he employs its idiom and recognizes the value of some of its insights. Shariati advocates a politically active, even revolutionary, revitalized Shiaism, indigenous to Iran, struggling for social justice, as a third way between Westernization and Marxism.*[18]

Behrangi was a village teacher and a graduate of Tabriz University with a B.A. in English literature who believed that Iranian textbooks must be changed and the textbooks must be suitable and familiar to the children's environment. The textbook's contents are mostly are translated from the American texts to Persian and placed in the Persian school's textbooks. Perhaps, it was for this reason that Behrangi wrote his own text for Azarbiajani's children, who spoke Turkish at home and had to learn Farsi in the public schools. He wanted to see a major change in selecting the content and subject area from elementary school level to the university. Hanson presents some of Behrangi's idea.

> *... more than 90 percent of the education and*

psychology texts used in Iranian teacher training schools are American educators' texts translated into Persian. While their (American) teachers' problems of underweight or overweight students may be relevant to the United States, these American texts are totally irrelevant to Iranian problems. At best, they might be applicable to only a few schools in northern part of Tehran, but not to the Iranian villages.[49]

Al-e Ahmad always had an extremist point of view regarding Iranian higher educational relations with the West, particularly western Europe and the United States. Hanson's perception concerning Al-e Ahmad's view is,

> *...Al-e Ahmad goes further and proposes a complete half of the dispatch of Iranian students to Europe and the United States for perhaps twenty years, suggesting instead that they be sent only to Japan and India, the two countries in his opinion which have best coped with the machine age and adopted (it is spelled as it is) technology well...*[50]

Hanson's view about Shariati's ideology is very different in comparison to the other two. He believes that Shariati was the creator of ground theory of the Iranian Revolution and its uniqueness in opposition to the West. "...Only Shariati, the most western-educated of them all, developed a response capable of mobilizing large numbers of Iranian during the 1978-1979 Revolution."[51]

Final Words

A selected gorup of publications and books which contained information related to the problems and issues of the higher education relations between Iran and the United States between 1960 and 1987 were examined in this inquiry. The perceptions of qualified specialist informants regarding the various impacts on both societies within the domain of higher education were investigated. The evidence that was compiled made it clear that since 1960 higher education policies, programs, and practices in Iran had important influences on the economic, political, religious, and social aspects of the country. As the informants understand the situation, the reverse is also undoubtedly true. Most of the sources from which data for this research was obtained also recognized that the relations among Iranian and United States institutions of higher learning had a considerable influence on the American system as well.

According to the perceptions of many informants, higher education relations between a less economically advanced country like Iran and a technologically sophisticated on such as the United States are uneven. Thus, they believe that in many aspects, the involvements were rather one-sided. Tneir analyses conclude that the more powerful society penetrates the culture of the less powerful one to a much greater extant than is inversely the case. They therefore describe the many American higher

education influences that caused a vast and very rapid development of the system of higher learning in Iran. They do not emphasize the inverse dynamics in which American universities were being affected by their Iranian connections.

In some of the documents there was, however, recognition that the modern western type of learning was being infused into the traditional Islamic system of higher learning in Iran prior to the Revolution, there the western instructional and discipline methods met with great resistance. Thus a major sector of higher education in Iran remained distant from the innovations taking place in the universities. Not only were the academic changes not adopted uniformly across the spectrum of Iranian higher learning, but particularly the madrasah teachers and their students, and the considerable constituency of their supporters, were hostile to the changes. This was a profound ideological confrontation in which the Iranians who adopted the American approaches were regarded as atheists and materialists. From the perspective of Shiite Islamic clerics, they had turned their backs on Iran's Muslim heritage.

These documents demonstrate that many scholars recognized that both before and after the Revolution, the Iranian higher education system confronted many major internal and external problems. The problems grew not only from the wholesale adoption of a westernized and some of the Western European higher education, but also from the country's unique culturally, economic, political, religious, and social characteristics.

Perhaps, several hardworking generations would be needed to overcome these deep and strongly-rooted problems of higher education. They are, furthermore, linked with other economic, political, religious, and social issues. So improving higher education requires having at least a workable option in these related areas which implies the internal and external impacts of any of these social and cultural phenomenon.

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